



BUDGET COMMITTEE



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Senator Gregg: CBO Confirms Medical Liability Reform Would Significantly Reduce Health Care Costs

Liability Reform Must be Part of Comprehensive Health Reform Bill

Senator Judd Gregg, ranking member of the Senate Budget Committee and a senior member of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today commented on a Congressional Budget Office (CBO) analysis of the budgetary impact of medical liability reform proposals.

“According to CBO, comprehensive medical liability reform would reduce national health care costs by 0.5% – which translates to \$11 billion in 2009 – and reduce federal budget deficits by approximately \$54 billion over the next 10 years. In addition, reform would reduce medical liability insurance premiums for doctors – often their biggest expense and the reason why some must limit or even shut their practice.

“The American Medical Association estimates that medical liability costs are passed along to patients in this country at a price tag as high as \$151 billion each year. Unreasonable lawsuits and the absurdly high cost of malpractice insurance are driving up costs for patients and have forced doctors out of practice. Reducing access to health care for patients who need it most is simply wrong.

“Unfortunately, none of the health reform bills being promoted by the Democratic leadership even begin to address the need for comprehensive medical liability reform. We cannot begin to address the affordability of health care in this country unless we are willing to reduce the frivolous lawsuits that can cause doctors to charge higher fees, order unnecessary procedures out of fear of being sued, or go out of practice all together.”

Senator Gregg is a long-time advocate for medical liability reform. He is an original cosponsor of the *Medical Care Access Protection Act of 2009*, which would provide comprehensive medical liability reform with nationwide standards of care and reasonable limits on pain, suffering and non-compensatory damages. Last Congress, Senator Gregg also authored legislation, the *Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Access to Care Act*, to provide similar relief to obstetricians who are particularly challenged by malpractice liability.